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# Watson's Art Journal.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, DEC. 28, 1867.

PUBLICATION OFFICE, CLINTON HALL, ASTOR PLACE.

## CONCERT OF THE N. Y. PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

The Second Concert of the twenty-sixth season of the N. Y. Philharmonic Society was given at the Academy of Music on Saturday evening, the 21st inst., before a brilliant audience.

The programme was as follows :

PART I. Symphony, in C, Schubert.

Concerto, for the piano, in F minor, Weber.—Miss Alide Topp.

PART II. Overture, "Othello," (1st time,) Ritter.

Fantasia, "Ruins of Athens," (with orchestral accompaniment,) Liszt.—Miss Alide Topp.

Overture, "Calm at Sea, and happy Voyage," Mendelssohn.

The orchestra consisted of one hundred performers, and a more splendid mass of sonority was never listened to by a New York audience.

Schubert's beautiful symphony, in C, we have fully discussed before. On this occasion it was more than ever interesting from the superb manner in which it was rendered. Its exquisite melodial points, its masterly treatment, and its refined and poetic instrumentation, all were brought-out in admirable relief by the master touches of light and shade, conceived by the Conductor, and carried out with wonderful exactitude by the orchestra. It was a performance of such rare excellence as to be remarkable even among our memorable Philharmonic concerts.

Mr. Ritter's overture, "Othello," is a clever and musicianly composition; well instrumented and tolerably sequential as to thought, but in purpose it is weak, and we do not find in it any flash of inspiration. It smells of labor and the midnight oil, but in spontaneity it is greatly wanting, and, as a piece of music painting, it but faintly illustrates its title. It occupied a place in the programme which could have been much better filled. Why is Sterndale Bennett studiously omitted from our Philharmonic programme now?

Mendelssohn's exquisite tone picture, "Calm at Sea, and happy Voyage," was beautifully interpreted by the orchestra; the tender and delicate flow of the instrumentation was deliciously given, and the poetic picture was faithfully reproduced, with all the fine coloring of the author. The whole orchestral performance was not only entirely unexceptionable, but was of the highest degree of excellence, and commanded

the admiration of the most critical audience in the country.

Miss Alide Topp was the soloist of the evening, and her performance fully justified the selection directors. Miss Topp ranks with our first pianists, in the main points of excellence, although she exhibits some deficiency in actual physical power—a want which must be attributed to her sex. She possesses a fluent and brilliant execution, which is articulate, however rapid, or whether the movement be legato, rubato, or con brio. Her touch is fine in every point, her phrasing is decided and intelligent, her finger is unfailing, touching no false notes, and her style is broad and in a high degree intellectual. In point of depth of sentiment we think that she lacks *abandon*, but in grace she lacks nothing, and she is by no means deficient in expression.

Although she played Weber's F minor concerto finely, in a mere executive point of view, and in that she was almost faultless, her great and deserved success was in Liszt's Fantasia, "The Ruins of Athens." In this she was perfectly at home. Its numerous difficulties she had entirely mastered; to its meaning she had the key, and she dashed through its wild fantastic passages, and revelled in its fiery imaginations with a kindred feeling and an unembarrassed power of execution which fully and vividly interpreted its every meaning. It was unquestionably a remarkable performance, and was altogether the best and most appreciative reading of Liszt that we have heard in this country. It was a pure Liszt inspiration, and would have fully satisfied the great master himself. Her performance was greeted with a perfect storm of applause, which compelled her to acknowledge the encore, and in reply to it she played an Hungarian Rhapsody by Liszt, which is replete with all the idiosyncracies of that composer, even more splendidly than the previous piece. It was a veritable triumph, and the enthusiastic applause which greeted her at the close was an honorable and deserved tribute to her fine accomplishments and her brilliant talent.

We cordially congratulate Miss Alide Topp upon her well-earned and unequivocal success before the highest musical tribunal in this country; it is a fortunate augury of her future career, for it places her in the front rank with the greatest pianists of the day.

We are pleased to record that the Second Philharmonic Concert was, in all respects, as admirable and as satisfactory as the first, and we congratulate Dr. Doremus, the directors, and Mr. Carl Bergmann upon the brilliant position which the Society has assumed under their guidance.

The selections for the Third Concert are Beethoven's Choral Symphony and Spohr's Overture "Jessonda." Mr. S. B. Mills will be the soloist.

## MISS JENNY BUSK'S CONCERT.

The farewell concert given by this young and accomplished artist took place at Irving Hall on Monday evening last. The beginning of Holiday Week is unfavorable to all amusements, but more especially to concerts. On Monday evening nearly every place of public entertainment was more than half empty, and Miss Busk must congratulate herself that under circumstances so unfavorable her concert was well attended.

Miss Jenny Busk's singing on this occasion fully justified our former expression of opinion. She has gained more confidence with the public, and has now a better control of her powers. Her voice is an exceedingly pure soprano of wide compass, and perfectly equal throughout. Its quality is both melodious and brilliant, and its culture has been careful and thorough; and in the pursuit of the graces of art, the development of sentiment and expression has been by no means neglected. In short, she has some of the best points of a true artist, and cannot fail to win popularity and maintain a high position as a vocalist. On this occasion her singing was thoroughly appreciated, the Queen of Night's song from Mozart's "Magic Flute" being her most brilliant effort, and she was greeted after each performance with hearty and continued applause. Miss Busk leaves New York with the regret of all who have heard her, but she carries with her a reputation fairly earned which will be a passport for her wherever she goes.

Mr. Leopold de Meyer assisted Miss Busk, and played with his usual brilliant facility, but he seemed to be all the time in danger of leaving the orchestra suddenly, as he brought his hat with him (and an extraordinary hat it is) to be ready for a start at a moment's notice. However, he didn't leave until he had finished his pieces. Mr. Hill, Mr. Kopta and Mr. Colby, who also assisted, acquitted themselves to the satisfaction of the audience.

Miss Jenny Busk will give several concerts in Baltimore and Washington during the month of January, 1868, when we understand she will be assisted by the celebrated violinist, Mr. J. B. Poznanski, and Mr. Charles Fradel.

## ART GOSSIP.

Every gallery of the city beams with sunshine, and the pictures smile from the walls for expected purchasers. Those who can go into Goupil's or Schaus' galleries without finding something that will please the most fastidious taste in art, we pity. Among the marked pictures at Schaus' are two by Edouard Hammon, and are drawn from the lives of Paul Veronese and Murillo. The first tells the story of the meeting of Veronese, Tintoretli